

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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MARYLAND WILD DUCK TRAPPER GETS MAXIMUM FEDERAL FINE

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Cleveland G. Adams, of Wenona, Md., was fined \$500 under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by Judge Chesnut in Federal Court at Baltimore recently for illegally trapping and possessing wild ducks in the closed season.

Judge Chesnut assessed the duck trapper the maximum Federal fine. At the same time he called attention to the seriousness of trapping and wholesale destruction of wildfowl. He was reluctant, he stated, to let Cleveland go without imposing a jail sentence in conjunction with the fine.

Adams, with a companion, was caught the morning of February 10 on South Marsh, Somerset County, Md., south of Deal Island.

Game Agents of the U. S. Biological Survey, working in the territory to stop duck trapping, made the arrest. Adams' companion was later freed for lack of evidence.

After weeks of careful checking, the Game Agents had learned that Adams fished his traps between 4 and 10 in the morning. Hiding out in the long marsh grass, they waited four hours on the cold February morning to make the arrest.

The trapper, who admitted selling his catches for 75 cents a pair and upwards, did not divulge the names of purchasers of his illegal hauls.

"Duck trapping in this section had been going on for some time," says W. E. Crouch, Game Management Chief of the Survey. "Adams did not deny that he had taken many ducks in this manner during the season. Judge Chesnut's applica-

tion of the maximum fine will discourage wild duck trappers in that vicinity. Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act the buyer of migratory waterfowl is also guilty. We are after them as well as these duck trappers."

Most of the ducks caught by trappers in this section, Crouch explains, are bought by "duck bootleggers" who in turn sell them in large eastern cities. Regulations governing the taking of waterfowl have been stringent in recent years in order that more birds might return to the breeding grounds, and thereby bring about a quicker realization of the objectives of the national waterfowl restoration program. A few years ago the waterfowl were declining rapidly in numbers, but during the past two seasons the decline has been checked and once again increasing flights are familiar sights.

Federal game-law enforcement agents have managed to break up the illegal market hunting practice to a large extent on the west coast, in the Middle West, and in Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas, where it once flourished. Progress is being made on the East Coast. The cooperation of sportsmen, State game and police officials, and others has helped the Federal agents greatly in their work. In Maryland, for example, the Federal agents are being assisted by State game and police officials. The U. S. Coast Guard also cooperates with the agents.

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